

Docket No. F-6863

Ser. No. 09/786,098

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Withdrawn-Original) A method of forming a framework for mounting panels on a roof, the method comprising the steps of:

fixing a first panel support element to a roof, the first panel support element having engagement means for linking in predetermined juxtaposition with adjacent like panel support elements, each panel support element including support means for releasably receiving and supporting a respective one of the panels;

locating a second panel support element adjacent the first element and fixing the second element in a predetermined juxtaposition with the first element by the engagement means; and

attaching one of the panels to each panel support element, the arrangement being such that the attached panels are disposed in predefined juxtaposition.

2. (Withdrawn-Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the panels form a substantially co-planar array substantially independently of the evenness of the roof.

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3. (Withdrawn-Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the framework, when assembled, provides a substantially rigid structure to support the substantially co-planar array of panels.

4. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the framework is applied to a tiled roof, and the method further including the steps of:

removing a tile from the roof;

attaching a depending fastener element to a rafter, or other structural member of the roof;

replacing the tile on the roof such that the upper end of the fastener element is covered but leaving the lower part of the fastener exposed; and

attaching the panel support element to the lower part of the fastener element.

5. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method as claimed claim 3, wherein the roof is made of sheet material, and the method includes the step of:

attaching a proximal portion of a fastener element to a structural member of the roof through the sheet material; and

attaching the panel support element to a distal portion of the fastener element.

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6. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the panels are photovoltaic panels.
7. (Withdrawn-Original) The method of claim 6, further including the step of prewiring the framework for interconnection of the photovoltaic panels before the panels are mounted on the framework.
8. (Withdrawn-Original) The method of claim 7, wherein an inverter is provided in association with each photovoltaic panel.
9. (Withdrawn-Original) The method of claim 8, wherein each inverter is provided with an output connection and at least one input connection connected in parallel to facilitate parallel electrical connection of a series of inverters.
10. (Withdrawn-Original) The method as claimed in claim 9, further including the step of preforming cables of predetermined length and routing the cables via the panel supporting elements before the panels are mounted on the framework.
11. (Currently Amended) A panel support structure comprising:

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a first unitary panel support element, said first panel support element solely and individually supporting a panel, said first panel support element comprising:

having fixing means for fixing said first panel support element to a roof;

support means for entirely supporting, releasably receiving and engaging a panel on said first panel support element; and

engagement means for linking said first the panel support element with a second an adjacent like panel support element and fixing said first panel support element to said second panel support element so that said first panel support element is disposed in a predetermined juxtaposition to said second panel support element; ~~each panel support element including support means; to support and releasably engage a panel; the engagement means being configured for securing adjacent panel support elements such that their respective panels are disposed~~

said panel supported on and in engagement with said first panel support being disposed in a predetermined predefined juxtaposition to a panel supported on and in engagement with said second panel support element.

12. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element as claimed in claim 11, wherein a first elongate member ~~is provided~~, having a length 2L extends

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in a first direction and two transversely oriented second and third elongate members, each having a length L_1 are symmetrically disposed about the center centre of the first elongate member and transversely disposed with respect to said first elongated member.

13. (Currently Amended) The panel support ~~structure element~~ of claim 26, wherein hinge means are provided at each end of the transverse elongate members, each of the hinge means being configured to cooperate with a hinge bracket provided on the reverse side of the respective panel.

14. (Currently Amended) The panel support ~~structure element~~ of claim 13, wherein the elongate members have a substantially constant cross section along their length.

15. (Currently Amended) The panel support ~~structure element~~ as claimed in claim 14, wherein a plurality of fastener elements are provided for attaching the panel support element to the roof, the fasteners being in the form of an elongate metal strap on end of which is attachable to said first panel support element and the other end of which is attachable to the roof.

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16. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element of claim 15, wherein the fastener elements are provided with preformed holes to facilitate attachment to the roof and the support element.

17. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element of claim 16, including an attachment clip which cooperates with the cross-section shape of the members of the panel support element, to clip onto the support element, the attachment clip being provided with a plurality of holes to allow adjustable connection of the fastener element by way of a screw or rivet.

18. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element as claimed in claim 17, wherein the holes in the attachment clip differ in pitch when compared with those of the fastener strap to allow a vernier adjustment of the location of the support element.

19. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element as claimed in claim 18, wherein the attachment clip is slidingly engaged with the respective member of the support element to provide adjustment of the location of the support element in the longitudinal direction of the respective member.

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20. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element of claim 12, wherein the engagement means comprises bracket elements of a predetermined length defining mating means for engaging with corresponding mating means provided at a predetermined location at or adjacent each end of the members of the panel support element.

21. (Currently Amended) The panel support structure element of claim 20, wherein the corresponding mating means includes a pair of detents provided adjacent each end of the first elongate member and the two transverse elongate members.

22. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) A kit of parts for assembling a supporting frame and fitting a photovoltaic panel to a roof, including:

a panel support element;

a fastener strap and attachment clip for fastening the panel support element to a roof;

three engagement bracket elements for linking the supporting frame to adjacent frames in predetermined juxtaposition;

four hinge brackets and attachment means for attaching the hinge brackets to the back of a photovoltaic panel; and

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a connector cable of sufficient length to connect a photovoltaic panel to an adjacent juxtaposed panel or junction box.

23. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The kit of parts as claimed in claim 22, further including a photovoltaic panel.

24. (Withdrawn-Original) The kit of parts as claimed in claim 24, wherein an inverter is included for converting a dc power output of the photovoltaic panel to ac power for connection to an ac power grid or a grid connected building distribution system.

25. (Withdrawn-Original) The kit of parts as claimed in claim 25, wherein the kit is packed in a single package.

26. (Currently Amended) The panel support ~~structure element~~ as claimed in claim 12, wherein the transversely oriented elongate members are located midway between the ~~center centre~~ and either end of the first elongate member.

27. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the panels are photovoltaic panels.

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28. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method of claim 27, further including the step of prewiring the framework for interconnection of the photovoltaic panels before the panels are mounted on the framework.

29. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein an inverter is provided in association with each photovoltaic panel.

30. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein each inverter is provided with an output connection and at least one input connection connected in parallel to facilitate parallel electrical connection of a series of invertors.

31. (Withdrawn-Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 30, further including the step of preforming cables of predetermined length and routing the cables via the panel supporting elements before the panels are mounted on the framework.